

The darker side of the moon: Satanic traditions in New Zealand as magick systems

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The darker side of the moon: Satanic traditions in New Zealand as magick systems

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Abstract:

When people discover the topic of my thesis they usually ask "Why Satanism?". In 1998 Satanism caught my attention when I was doing an undergraduate paper in sociology, the sociology of religion. Here I encountered several studies on the Satanic Ritual Abuse phenomena (SRA, also known as Satanic Panic and Satanism scare) See appendices for a brief history of SRA of the late 1980's and early 1990's in England, America, Australia and here in New Zealand. SRA evolved from accusations that satanic cults were involved in rituals where children were physically and sexually abused, and possibly killed. There were also reports that children were being bred for such practices. Both here and overseas cases were investigated by government agencies. The Peter Ellis case is perhaps the defining example of SRA in New Zealand. See appendices for an overview of this case In 1999,I noticed the census figures between

1986 and 1996 showed a growth of New Zealanders who identified as Satanist during the height of SRA scare, with the number rising nearly 400% (from 240 to 906). From this several questions arose: perhaps most importantly what is Satanism: why had this number grown: and how does one become a Satanist? As I began researching answers to these questions, I became aware of elements that were not apparent from the literature. Not all Satanism is about being evil and using black Magick. The spelling of Magick with a 'k' is to differentiate between religious Magick and show (illusional) magic. This is explained in more detail later. Some elements of Satanism link it closely with other Magick traditions. In this thesis I discuss two questions: what is Satanism in New Zealand and is there a relationship between Satanism and other Magick traditions in New Zealand?

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